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COMMONWEALTH BUREAU OF CENSUS AND STATISTICS.

LABOUR TURNOVER, MARCH, 1960

1. This report gives the results of a survey of labour turnover in Australian industry in the month of March, 1960, and shows these results together with those obtained in similar surveys covering the months of March, 1949 to 1959, excepting March, 1951 and 1954. Because of the effect of seasonal fluctuations, the trends in labour turnover are most clearly shown by comparing successive turnover rates for the same month of each year. Labour turnover rates are influenced by the seasonal nature of employment, particularly in the Food, drink and tobacco industry and, to a lesser degree, in other industries. Turnover rates for the month of September in each of the years 1954 to 1959 were published on 28th January, 1960, in a statement entitled "Labour Turnover, September, 1959".

2. Labour turnover is generally measured by the number of engagements or separations expressed as percentages of average employment during the period under review. Engagements and separations refer to the turnover of individual businesses, including the movement from one business to another within the same industry group.

3. Table 1 below shows figures of both engagements and separations expressed in this way for manufacturing and non-manufacturing industries. Table 2 shows the separation rates for manual workers for more detailed industry groups, and Table 3 shows the analysis of these separation rates according to dismissals, retrenchments, persons leaving employment on their own initiative, and other causes.

4. The period covered in individual returns is not uniform, depending as it does on the dates on which pay-roll tax returns of individual businesses are made up for February and March in each year. The figures should be interpreted as applying to an average of about four and a half weeks.

Industrial Coverage

5. The surveys are based on a sample within certain industries of businesses subject to pay-roll tax. They exclude businesses whose pay-roll is below the taxable limit, as well as religious, benevolent and other similar organizations, which are exempt from pay-roll tax. In addition, the surveys exclude rural industry, private domestic service, certain professional services (e.g. accountancy firms, trade associations, consultant engineers, etc.), the shipping and stevedoring industry, the motion picture industry and all government employment and semi-government undertakings other than banks and airlines. Following a redesign of the sample, the industry groups shown in this issue differ slightly from those shown in previous issues. As far as practicable figures for March, 1960, and for earlier periods have been shown on a comparable basis.

6. Businesses in the construction industry were represented in the sample for the first time in the September, 1956, survey, and since then figures for this industry have been combined with those for the building industry. The rates for these two industries have been of a similar magnitude.

Engagements and Separations

7. Table 1 summarises the engagement and separation rates of the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors of industry. In one category "female other (non-manual) workers in manufacturing industry", the number of employees is relatively small. Less significance should be attached to changes in labour turnover rates in this category than to similar changes in the larger employment categories.

8. Broadly, the table shows that turnover rates in March, 1952 and 1953, declined from high 1949 and 1950 levels, and then, after returning to relatively high levels in 1955 and 1956, fell again in March, 1957 and 1958. The latest bulletin in the September series shows that the turnover rates for September, 1959, were higher than those for September, 1958, but still below the rates for September, 1954 and 1955.

9. All turnover rates, particularly those for manual workers, were higher in March, 1960, than in March, 1959.

TABLE 1 : ENGAGEMENTS AND SEPARATIONS : 1949 TO 1960

(Percentage of average employment in each group)

	1949	1950	1952	1953	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Manual Workers	MALES									
Engagements										
Manufacturing	9.3	8.4	6.0	4.7	8.0	7.1	5.1	4.5	5.0	6.8
Non-manufacturing	8.1	7.3	6.5	4.8	9.2	7.0	6.1	5.3	5.4	6.8
All industries (a)	8.9	8.0	6.2	4.8	8.4	7.0	5.5	4.8	5.1	6.8
Separations										
Manufacturing	8.5	8.7	7.0	4.2	7.5	6.8	4.8	4.5	4.8	6.1
Non-manufacturing	7.1	7.5	6.9	4.2	8.4	7.5	6.4	5.5	6.2	6.4
All industries (a)	8.0	8.3	7.0	4.2	7.8	7.1	5.4	4.9	5.3	6.2
Non-manual Workers										
Engagements										
Manufacturing	1.8	2.2	1.9	1.6	2.4	2.3	2.0	1.9	1.8	2.1
Non-manufacturing	3.5	2.8	2.6	2.1	2.8	3.0	2.1	2.3	2.6	3.2
All industries (a)	3.0	2.6	2.4	1.9	2.7	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.8
Separations										
Manufacturing	1.4	1.6	1.9	1.6	2.0	2.2	1.8	1.5	1.7	1.9
Non-manufacturing	2.8	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.9	3.0	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.7
All industries (a)	2.3	2.1	2.4	2.3	2.6	2.7	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.4
FEMALES										
Manual Workers										
Engagements										
Manufacturing	11.0	10.5	6.4	9.0	8.9	7.9	7.7	7.0	7.1	8.3
All industries (a)	10.7	11.0	6.8	8.5	8.7	8.1	7.6	6.7	6.8	8.2
Separations										
Manufacturing	8.9	8.6	9.7	6.1	8.9	9.1	6.1	6.1	5.5	7.2
All industries (a)	9.0	9.3	9.7	5.9	8.5	8.7	6.1	6.0	5.6	7.2
Non-manual Workers										
Engagements										
Manufacturing	3.9	4.8	4.0	4.0	5.4	5.0	4.2	4.2	3.6	4.7
Non-manufacturing	9.9	5.8	5.5	5.8	6.5	5.8	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.9
All industries (a)	8.5	5.6	5.1	5.4	6.2	5.6	4.4	4.4	4.0	4.9
Separations										
Manufacturing	3.4	4.4	4.2	3.2	5.0	3.9	4.2	3.4	3.4	3.8
Non-manufacturing	8.2	5.7	5.8	4.6	5.6	5.4	4.6	4.6	4.2	5.0
All industries (a)	7.1	5.3	5.4	4.3	5.5	5.0	4.5	4.3	4.0	4.7

(a) See introductory text for note on industrial coverage. (b) Includes "Non-manufacturing" for which no estimates are available.

Separation Rates of Manual Workers by Industry Group:

10. Table 2 gives a dissection by industry group of the separation rates of manual workers which were shown in Table 1. It shows that the separation rates for male manual workers were higher in March, 1960, than those in the previous March in all industry groups except the "Building and construction" and "Mining" groups. In general, the separation rates in March, 1960 of female manual workers were higher than the corresponding rates in March, 1959. The rate for the "Food, drink and tobacco" industry group was considerably higher than last year. In the interpretation of figures for the "Food, drink and tobacco" industry group, it should be remembered that this group contains certain seasonal industries (e.g. fruit canning) which engage and retrench a large number of workers each season, and considerable fluctuation in the turnover may occur because a season may be later in one year than another.

TABLE 2 : SEPARATION RATES FOR MANUAL WORKERS BY INDUSTRY, MARCH, 1949 TO 1960

(Percentage of average employment in each group)

Industry Group	1949	1950	1952	1953	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
MALES										
Manufacturing -	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Engineering and vehicles	8.1	7.4	6.3	4.2	7.4	6.5	4.8	4.4	4.8	6.1
(i) Engineering (a)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.2
(ii) Vehicles (b)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.1
Textiles and clothing	n.a.	7.6	8.7	3.3	6.2	5.3	3.4	3.1	4.0	5.2
Food, drink and tobacco	10.2	13.0	8.8	6.3	10.0	9.7	8.0	7.0	7.6	8.4
Furniture, sawmilling and woodworking	11.6	9.9	7.0	3.5	6.1	6.2	3.9	4.0	4.2	5.2
Paper and printing	4.5	4.8	3.8	1.3	3.5	3.9	2.6	1.8	2.5	3.2
Other manufacturing	8.3	8.5	7.7	3.8	8.0	7.2	4.4	4.6	4.2	5.9
(i) Chemicals and oil refining	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5.3
(ii) Other	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.1
All manufacturing	8.5	8.7	7.0	4.2	7.5	6.8	4.8	4.5	4.8	6.1
Non-manufacturing -										
Mining	3.4	4.1	2.7	1.9	3.8	3.7	4.0	2.4	4.0	3.5
Building and construction(c)	10.7	8.4	10.9	6.4	11.8	12.7	11.2	10.5	11.1	10.5
Road transport	6.7	7.4	4.1	4.1	9.0	6.2	5.3	4.1	4.5	5.4
Wholesale and retail trade	n.a.	n.a.	5.2	4.0	8.5	6.2	4.8	4.2	5.0	5.3
Other non-manufacturing	9.8	10.5	9.5	3.8	7.8	9.3	5.1	4.9	4.1	5.6
All non-manufacturing	7.1	7.5	6.9	4.2	8.4	7.5	6.4	5.5	6.2	6.4
All industries (d)	8.0	8.3	7.0	4.2	7.8	7.1	5.4	4.9	5.3	6.2

FEMALES

Manufacturing -	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Engineering and vehicles	11.6	12.1	10.8	4.9	9.6	8.2	7.7	5.2	5.3	6.8
Textiles	9.1	7.1	9.0	3.8	7.0	5.9	4.6	4.7	4.3	5.0
Clothing	5.0	5.8	9.5	6.0	7.2	5.8	4.4	4.1	4.3	4.9
Food, drink and tobacco	21.7	13.7	9.2	10.4	16.1	23.4	10.7	14.0	10.3	17.4
Paper and printing	6.6	9.3	10.4	3.8	5.8	6.0	4.5	4.0	4.0	5.0
Chemicals and oil refining	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	6.6
All manufacturing (e)	8.9	8.6	9.7	6.1	8.9	9.1	6.1	6.1	5.5	7.2
All industries (f)	9.0	9.3	9.7	5.9	8.5	8.7	6.1	6.0	5.6	7.2

(a) Extracting, refining, founding, engineering, metalworking, electrical equipment.

(b) Vehicles, aircraft and ships. Includes assembly and repairs.

(c) Construction other than building not included before March, 1957.

(d) See introductory text for note on industrial coverage.

(e) Includes certain industry groups not specified above for which no estimates are available.

(f) Includes "Non-manufacturing" for which no estimates are available.

Analysis of Separations for Manual Workers:

11. In Table 3, separations of manual workers are classified by type of separation (dismissed, retrenched, left and other). Businesses submitting returns were asked to class employees as "dismissed" where employment was terminated on the employer's initiative for disciplinary or similar reasons; as "retrenched" where the employment was terminated, permanently or otherwise, on the employer's initiative for reasons such as a reduction in the scale of operations, breakdown in machinery, shortage of materials, completion of the job, etc.; as "left" where employment was terminated on the employee's initiative (employees on strike are not included as separations); and as "other" where the separation was due to death, injury, permanent retirement (including women leaving to be married), enlistment in the forces, or similar reasons.

12. The table gives the above-mentioned dissection of separation rates for March, 1959, and March, 1960, for male and female manual workers. Previous issues in the series have contained corresponding information for earlier years.

13. As in previous periods, most separations in March, 1959, and March, 1960, were due to persons leaving on their own initiative. In the "Food, drink and tobacco" industry, which is affected by seasonal factors, it is usual for the retrenchment rate to be higher than the "left" rate. In March, 1959, the retrenchment rate was higher than the "left" rate in the building and construction industry also.

14. Table 3 shows that the "left" rates in March, 1960, were higher than those of the previous year. Rates were higher in every industry group.

The higher rates are most noticeable in the following groups:

Males - Engineering and vehicles, Textiles and clothing, Furniture, sawmilling and woodworking, Other manufacturing, Building and construction, Wholesale and retail trade, and Road transport;

Females - Engineering and vehicles.

The higher separation rates are due almost entirely to these changes.

15. The retrenchment rates were substantially the same in March, 1960, as in the previous year. The rate for males in the "Building and construction" industry was considerably lower. There were smaller changes in the "Other manufacturing" group. The rate for females in the "Food, drink and tobacco" industry group was considerably higher than last year; this fact is probably due largely to the seasonal factors mentioned earlier.

TABLE 3 : ANALYSIS OF SEPARATIONS FOR MANUAL WORKERS
MARCH, 1959, AND MARCH, 1960

(Percentage of average employment in each group)

Industry Group	March, 1959					March, 1960				
	D	R	L	O	Total	D	R	L	O	Total
MALES										
Manufacturing -	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Engineering and vehicles	0.7	1.0	3.0	0.1	4.8	0.9	0.7	4.4	0.1	6.1
(i) Engineering (a)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1.0	0.5	4.6	0.1	6.2
(ii) Vehicles (b)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.9	1.2	3.7	0.3	6.1
Textiles and clothing	0.6	0.5	2.7	0.2	4.0	0.9	0.5	3.7	0.1	5.2
Food, drink and tobacco	0.6	3.9	2.9	0.2	7.6	0.7	4.2	3.4	0.1	8.4
Furniture, sawmilling, etc.	0.6	0.9	2.6	0.1	4.2	0.6	0.6	3.9	0.1	5.2
Paper and printing	0.3	0.1	2.0	0.1	2.5	0.4	0.1	2.6	0.1	3.2
Other manufacturing	0.6	0.7	2.8	0.1	4.2	0.9	0.3	4.6	0.1	5.9
(i) Chemicals and oil refining	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.7	0.3	4.2	0.1	5.3
(ii) Other	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.9	0.2	4.9	0.1	6.1
All manufacturing	0.7	1.2	2.8	0.1	4.8	0.8	1.1	4.1	0.1	6.1
Non-manufacturing -										
Mining	0.5	1.1	2.3	0.1	4.0	0.3	0.2	2.9	0.1	3.5
Building and construction	1.7	5.1	4.2	0.1	11.1	2.1	2.6	5.8	0.0	10.5
Road transport	0.9	1.3	2.3	0.0	4.5	0.7	0.7	4.0	0.0	5.4
Wholesale and retail trade	0.8	1.8	2.3	0.1	5.0	0.6	1.1	3.5	0.1	5.3
Other non-manufacturing	1.3	0.3	2.4	0.1	4.1	1.2	1.1	3.2	0.1	5.6
All non-manufacturing	1.1	2.3	2.7	0.1	6.2	1.0	1.3	4.0	0.1	6.4
All Industries (c)	0.8	1.6	2.8	0.1	5.3	0.9	1.1	4.1	0.1	6.2

TABLE 3 (Continued)

Industry Group	March, 1959					March, 1960				
	D	R	L	O	Total	D	R	L	O	Total
<u>FEMALES</u>										
Manufacturing -	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Engineering and vehicles	0.4	1.4	3.5	0.0	5.3	0.9	0.7	5.0	0.2	6.8
Textiles	0.3	1.0	2.9	0.1	4.3	0.4	0.4	4.1	0.1	5.0
Clothing	0.9	0.3	3.0	0.1	4.3	1.0	0.5	3.2	0.2	4.9
Food, drink and tobacco	0.6	5.4	4.2	0.1	10.3	1.2	10.0	6.1	0.1	17.4
Paper and printing	0.7	0.1	3.2	0.0	4.0	0.5	0.3	4.0	0.2	5.0
Chemicals and oil refining	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	0.4	1.5	4.6	0.1	6.6
All manufacturing (d)	0.6	1.5	3.3	0.1	5.5	0.8	1.9	4.3	0.2	7.2
All industries (e)	1.0	1.2	3.3	0.1	5.6	0.9	1.7	4.5	0.1	7.2

- D. Dismissed : Employment terminated on the employer's initiative for disciplinary or similar reasons.
- R. Retrenched : Employment terminated, permanently or otherwise, on the employer's initiative for reasons such as a reduction in the scale of operations, breakdown in machinery, shortage of materials, completion of the job.
- L. Left : Employment terminated on the employee's initiative. Employees on strike not included.
- O. Other : Includes separations due to death, injury, permanent retirement (including women leaving to be married), enlistment in the forces, and similar reasons.

(a) Extracting, refining, founding, engineering, metalworking, electrical equipment.

(b) Vehicles, aircraft and ships. Includes assembly and repairs.

(c) See introductory text for note on industrial coverage.

(d) Includes certain industry groups not specified above for which no estimates are available.

(e) Includes "Non-Manufacturing" for which no estimates are available.

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LAB					March, 1959					March, 1960				
D	R	L	O	Total	D	R	L	O	Total	D	R	L	O	Total